

# Writing Tutoring



**AN OVERVIEW**

First Off:



**WELCOME!**

# The University Writing Center



- **The University Writing Center (UWC) is a safe space for students to receive one-on-one tutoring.**
  - For ANY discipline
  - At ANY level



# Student Needs



- **Most frequent requests:**
  - Brainstorming
  - Thesis/Topic Sentences
  - Evidence
  - Grammar
  - Citations and References
  - Understanding and/or Following the Prompt
  - Revision help
  - Style check
- Students may require assistance in more than one of the previous areas.

# Time Constraints



- Appointments are **30** minutes unless they are ESL (English as Second Language) or have a documented learning disability.
  - If you are in a tutorial and do not have another tutorial afterwards, feel free to continue with the student until another arrives.
- Up to **two** appointments in one day but only **three** total in a week.
- It is important for students to understand that writing is a skill that takes practice, just like any other.

# Qualities of a Good Tutor



- **Knowledgeable**
- **Integrity**
- **Empathy**
- **Flexibility**
- **Listening Skills**
- **Acceptance of Individual Differences**

# Tutoring Process



- **Step one: Ask what the student needs help with before looking at assignment.**
- **Step two: Inform the student of time constraints if he/she has multiple concerns.**
  - In some situations, the tutor may also identify a problem that the student did not express; it is the tutor's prerogative if he/she wishes to address the other problems during the initial tutorial.
- **Step three: Provide student with helpful strategies for future writing situations.**

# Commenting



- Provide the students with as much feedback as possible without overwhelming and discouraging them.
- Make sure all criticism is constructive.
- Guide the student in the correct direction while being respectful.



# Content Concerns



- It is impossible to know about every piece of writing from a different discipline a student may bring in. For an assignment that might fall outside of English, it is best to help with argument structure instead.
- The tutor's knowledge of a specific discipline is fortuitous for the student--not mandatory.

# Grading Consultation



- We do **not** evaluate student writing for a grade.
- If a student asks, politely inform them of the UWC's policy and move on.
- Grading Consultation is only allowed when a student is meeting with his/her professor.

# Collaboration Prevention



- The pencil or pen (or keyboard) stays in the student's hands.
- The student is the one who should be taking notes during the tutorial, not the tutor.
- If the tutor does write something down, do not use full sentences.
- Model writing for the students without giving them all of the answers.
- Create examples for the student but use a different source text.
- Don't let the student borrow your words.
  - If a student likes a word the tutor uses to describe something, make sure they know how to define the word before they record it down in his/her notes.
- The paper needs to retain the student's voice at all times.
- We are not a one -top shop for all of their writing needs where they can pick up a full draft to turn in for a grade. We are here to help, not hand-hold.

# Professionalism



- While the tutor might not agree with an assignment or comment made by a professor, never collude with a student during a tutorial.
- Do not succumb to the temptation to discredit another professor's work in front of a student.
- If you have any concerns about a particular assignment, approach one of the UWC staff members.
- Professors deserve respect from their students.

# Behavioral Issues



- If you encounter rude, derisive, offensive, or disruptive behavior in a student, feel free to conclude the session and ask him/her to leave.
  - If you encounter a problem dismissing a student, feel free to approach one of the UWC staff members.
- If a student pulls out a cell phone, feel free to conclude the session.

# Types of Difficult Students



- Georgia Southwestern State University Writing Center created a Prezi of the types of difficult students you **will** encounter:
  - <http://prezi.com/spdilc3onl5a/you-gotta-meet-me-halfway-tutoring-reluctant-writers/>

# ESL



- English as Second Language students sometimes require slightly more help than native-speaking students.
- ESL students receive one-hour tutorials.

# Documented Learning Disabilities



- Like ESL students, students with a documented learning disability receive additional time (1 hour) if desired.
- If the student is undocumented but you feel he/she could benefit from longer sessions, let one of the UWC staff members know.



# Tutor Comfort



- **If a situation arises that you feel uncomfortable with or insecure about handling, let the UWC staff know.**
- **Any questions about anything not mentioned above or about a situation not listed, again, let one of the UWC staff members know.**